THE COMMONWEAL

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts, and Public Affairs.

Volume II | New York, Wednesday, July 8, 1925 | Number 9

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RUSSIA PASSES INTO HISTORY

ADVICES come from the Post Office Department to the effect that Russia no longer officially exists. Its place is taken by what is known as the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics—a title unwieldly enough, but one which rather aptly describes the change which has taken place, for, instead of one, there are now many republics. Yet, in many respects Russia never was to be considered as one; even the Romanoffs called themselves the "Czars of All the Russias," and in that list were Great Russia, White Russia, Little Russia, the Ukraine, Georgia, Siberia and others; united under one head and working together as one whole, but nevertheless, having their separate characteristics and their differences—in some cases deep and radical. The geographical extent of the country alone made much of this inevitable, for when one thinks of a land ranging from the frozen shores of the Arctic ocean to the mild Mediterranean—from China on the east to Germany and Scandinavia on the west, there is room for variety. Especially is this true of its longitudinal extent. Russia was both oriental and occidental in a way that no other nation or race has ever been. This is the reason for its great importance in world affairs, and this is why its official passing means far more than a mere change of names.

In the history of mankind various races have held the stage at one time or another. As we delve into the records of antiquity we find the Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Hebrews, and later on the Greeks and Romans rising to preëminence, waxing fat in their pride, and in it going forth to their fall. Later, in what we usually call modern history we find primarily the northern European peoples occupying a chief place on the stage. But more changes took place between 1914 and 1918 than we can yet reckon, and many observers believe that it was the beginning of the end for those who so long ruled the destinies of the world. The only great white race which has never yet had its "place in the sun," is the Slav—the race from which the Russian is sprung. Can it be then, that Russia has passed into history without its opportunity, without the turn of the wheel to bring it to the top? It hardly seems likely. What then, of the future?

The Russian people, who are the destined leaders of the Slavic race in general, are bound to have their chance on the stage of the world's progress. The question is, what shall that place be, and how will they utilize it? Few, except those badly bitten by the germ of Communism, believe that the present Russian system can long survive. Impartial observers, who have been in close touch with affairs there, believe that already death has taken possession of its members, and that the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics seems destined to disappear almost as suddenly as it

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has arisen. But, whatever their form of government, and whatever their attitude in many respects, the people will survive.

The general characteristic of the Slav race is its interpretation of everything in spiritual terms. We do not mean by this that they have a deeper spirituality than others; probably this is not true, but those things which are a symbol of the spiritual have always taken first place in their minds—hence Christianity as set forth in the oriental rites has always appealed strongly. Politics, the bane of religion in so many places, has played an unusually large part in the history of Slavic Christianity, and an intensely nationalistic spirit has become associated with certain religious symbols.

Orthodoxy was looked upon as the outward sign of their national aspirations. This brought with it its own disadvantages, for when the state failed, religion seemed to many to have failed also. It is here that a sound dogmatic training would have helped, but we must regretfully admit that they did not have it, and we must face things as they are. The Orthodox church is all but dead, yet the Russian cannot be satisfied with the husks with which the militant atheism of the Bolshevik government wishes to feed them. They must receive some symbol in place of that which has disappeared. An attempt has been made to substitute that caricature of orthodoxy, the so-called "living church," but the fact that it has already begun to show the tendency towards schism which has appeared sooner or later in every similar movement, reveals its weakness and shows that, as a symbol, it cannot long stand. The muzhik, however superstitious he may be, and lacking in doctrinal apprehension as he certainly is—senses with that Slav intuition of the spiritual, that something is wrong here—the hands may be the hands of Esau, but the voice is certainly that of Jacob. His quest for the symbol is yet unsatisfied. Yet he knows not how to find it for himself—he must receive it from his leaders to whom he has been accustomed to look. It is they who must point the way, and so it is they who must be shown the true way.

The only available symbol of stability in religion is Rome. Yet acceptance of this by the Slav is not so easy as it might seem to us. There is a thousand years of prejudice to overcome. The schism was principally due in the first place to the jealousy of Constantinople against the old Rome, in the sphere of world preëminence, and the Slavs blindly followed their Greek leaders at that time. With the rise of the czardom, a Russian political substitute for Constantinople came in, and the spirit of nationalism aided in keeping up the separation. The whole story is too long to be recounted here, but until its effects are overcome Russia's religious history seems destined to pass over the same road which is being trod by that of its government. The Russian Orthodox church has likewise passed into history, but as the race must once again come into its own and take its place in the field of world affairs, so too, must the Slavic people take their place in the religious progress of the race.

From his intimate contact with these people during his residence at Warsaw, Pope Pius XI saw this, and it is therefore but natural that his Pontificate should be distinguished by its efforts for reunion. It is not a matter of a moment—it is a work so vast that it staggers the imagination, and will take many men a long time to bring it about. The more one studies it, the greater and more far-reaching its problems are seen to be. It is the largest work with which the Church is concerned today, and it must enlist the sympathetic coöperation of every Catholic, and, indeed, of all who desire to see Christianity prevail as the standard and guide of a great race with such enormous potentialities for good and evil.

Old Russia and the old Russian church have passed—consumed, the world would say, in the fires of Red anarchy and atheism—but, phoenix-like there may arise a new Russia and a new day for Russia's religion—this time not only Orthodox in belief, but Catholic in its oneness with the centre of unity.

That this vein is consciously held by many Russians is made clear in the remarkable interview given by the distinguished Russian writer, Leontyn Woronin, to the correspondent of the N. C. W. C. News Service at Vienna—

" 'To give a proper idea of the breakdown of a Christian church organization which is second only to the Catholic, a breakdown which in its hugeness is second to none in the history of Christianity, one would have to write volumes,' said Mr. Woronin.

" 'The illustrious representatives of the Russian high clergy—such as Antonyus, the former metropolitan of Kieff; Metropolitan Plota, of Odessa; Eulogius, former archbishop of occupied Galicia; Metropolitan Deonysius, exarch of the Russian church in Poland; the Russian literati, Mereshkowski, Professor Bergjaew, Dibjatin and Skwrzow; and Welshin and Kartashow, former high procurators of the Holy Synod—have in pamphlets, newspapers and books done much to draw the attention of western Christianity to the imminent danger of an almost complete dissolution of the Russian church.'

" 'Of course, many of them, for reasons which readily can be understood and might well be excused, avoided mention of the most important conclusion, which, however, must be drawn from the terrible church-political process going on in Russia. But I am an independent man, who judges things objectively, and nothing can prevent me from proclaiming as an irrevocable truth that it is evident there is no other help for Russian Christianity but reconciliation with the Roman Catholic Church.' "

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Published weekly and copyrighted 1925, in the United States by the Calvert Publishing Corporation, 25 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York City, N. Y.

MICHAEL WILLIAMS, Editor

Assistant Editors

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Subscription Rates: Yearly: $10.00 Single Copies: $0.20

WEEK BY WEEK

THAT Santa Barbara will be restored, and that the restoration will make of the little city on the coast of California a place of even more romantic charm and beauty than before the earthquake, cannot be doubted. The Californians have already given the world too many proofs of their indomitable spirit and of their love for their state, for any question to remain on this score. It has also to be taken for granted that in the general rebuilding of the shattered portions of the city, the most precious possession of Santa Barbara—the famous Franciscan Mission—will not be neglected. For the second time, it undoubtedly will arise again from its ruins to remain as the spiritual centre of the community. Nevertheless, none who have ever visited the old mission, particularly those who have been privileged to penetrate its cloister and to know the Franciscan Fathers and Brothers who live there, can read of the destruction wrought so swiftly and terribly without a pang of sorrow.

APART from the tragedies involved in the loss of life in the disaster, undoubtedly the most thrilling incidents of the Santa Barbara earthquake occurred at the old mission. The Associated Press despatches relate two of these incidents. "Father Augustin, at the old Santa Barbara Mission, told a thrilling story of what he declared to be a miraculous deliverance. At the first tremor, he went to the second-story room, where Father Englebrecht, an aged priest and an invalid, and the author of histories of the mission, was confined. Lifting the invalid priest to his back, Father Augustin proceeded to the stairway, when with the second shock, he fell through a hole to the floor below with the invalid priest on his back. Neither was injured." A second incident runs as follows—"There were many Catholics at early Mass when the tremor occurred. The celebrant priest, although two statues above the altar fell down near him, turned and urged the worshippers to pray—and it was only his calming of them that saved their lives, for a few moments later the two towers and a section of the front of the mission fell to the sidewalk. The worshippers then walked out over the ruins."

THE usually accurate Associated Press commits one error in reporting these incidents. By "Father Englebrecht," can only be meant the venerable historian and missionary, Father Zephyrin Engelhardt, whose massive historical works, The Missions and Missionaries of California, in four huge volumes, together with The Franciscans in California, The Franciscans in Arizona, The Holy Man of Santa Clara, and the volumes relating to the separate missions in detail, constitute the great quarry to which all writers on California and southwestern history in general will be forever indebted. That Father Engelhardt may long be spared to continue the labors of a lifetime in recording the annals and legends of the California missions, will be the fervent wish of all who are acquainted with him and his work.

THE great congress of the Fascisti marked the climax of melodrama in politics. With black shirts, medals, huzzahs, feathers and speeches, Italy pledged to Mussolini the power to inaugurate a new régime. There can be no question that it will be inaugurated and made to survive at least as long as the dictator himself. The world may gasp, speculations in the lira may reach a point of frenzy, American debt commissions may suggest that something ought to be done about sums outstanding since 1917—but all of this cannot curb the will of Italy's strong men to set up a Bolshevism à rebours. A dozen institutions—good and bad—will have gone by the board. Rome's press is gagged, the might of political Masonry is tottering, the grip of a firm governmental hand on all forms of industry is the order of the day.

TO some extent, everyone who knows Italy must concede that Fascism has done considerable work to remedy the ingrained social ills of the country. It has unified the national spirit; it has begun to carry through certain of the agrarian reforms which have been discussed for decades, but left untouched; and it has established a sanitary code for the general morale. But the fundamental principle of Fascism is as mystifying as it is dangerous. The world cannot assimilate this autocracy of positivism, any more than it can digest the rhapsodies of Trotzky. It even begins to seem as though the supreme test case of Mus-

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solini's power would be the Catholic Church. Some time ago, it will be remembered, the Dictator issued a statement which made Catholicism the culture of Italy, and restored the universality of religious education. With one sweep he abolished all the heresies, the schisms, the agnosticisms of the modern era. In return, however, it seems to have been expected that Catholics as a body would invest in black shirts and feathers. Mussolini tried to wipe out with a gesture the splendid achievement of Don Sturzo and his friends. But the Catholics have sometimes proved recalcitrant—there have been Fascist attacks upon processions and pilgrimages, and the Holy Father has had to protest against violence and unfairness. It is impossible to tell if more serious developments may be in store—but it begins to be clear that the position of the Church in the midst of a Fascist deluge is not as secure as first asserted by Fascist advocates.

THE comment of the major American press upon the trouble in China, has been guarded and moderate, and there are good reasons why it should be. Some of these have just been suggested by Professor J. H. Blakeslee, of Clark University, who is in Honolulu for the meeting this week of the Institute of Pacific Relations. Over and beyond the disadvantages of any embroilment just now, the Professor foresees an eventual danger that "an Anglo-American group in the Pacific might find itself opposed by a grouping of Asian races with a prospect of race conflict." There is no need to stress a warning so plainly conveyed, or to lend it an immediacy it does not possess. The situation is enigmatic, and is not rendered less so by a special despatch to the New York Times last Tuesday, plainly hinting that those who would trace any of its really significant phases to Soviet intrigue, are barking up the wrong tree. Troubled waters make good fishing, and as long as diplomacy retains its present tendency of manoeuvring for position in some future Armageddon, there will be no lack of fishers. Extra-territoriality is always a ticklish affair. When it coincides with a growth of national consciousness on the part of the nation that conceives its pride wounded, it teems with dangers to peace. The duty of every power to defend its nationals in peril will not wait upon diplomacy. But when this has been done, and comparative quiet insured, it would not be a bad idea to examine the whole question of extra-territorial rights with China in friendly spirit and with due regard to those "intangibles of international relations—success, dignity, pride, sympathy and sensibilities," which Professor Blakeslee would have us respect.

A CELEBRATION that should not be allowed to pass without notice from lovers of liturgical music, is that of the Schola Cantorum in Paris, which last week celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the removal of its classes to the old convent of the English Benedictines in rue St. Jacques, Paris. During the thirty years of its existence, and under the direction of M. Vincent d'Indy, the school has so greatly extended the scope of its studies, and so many celebrated composers in the profane field have been graduated from it (one recalls the names of Albert Roussel, Marcel Labey, Paul Bertier and Marc de Ransel) that it is often forgotten how purely liturgical and religious were its beginnings. Founded by a few enthusiasts, headed by Charles Borde, in 1894, as the "Society of Religious Music," and with only forty francs in its treasury, the "Schola Cantorum" has probably done more than any existing body to make the recommendations of the "Motu Proprio," issued a few years later, an actuality. Its reputation has grown year by year, until the competition among musical students to be enrolled among its "500" is little less intense than that among architectural aspirants to enter the sister school of the Beaux Arts. Liturgical music is now only one department of its activities. But that it has never lost its predominant place is proved by the fact that rather more than half of the organists in Paris churches are its graduates.

ANOTHER development of the "Motu Proprio" of more immediate interest to Americans, is the visit to this country of Dom Ferretti, president of the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music in Rome, to conduct a course at the summer school held at Manhattanville. The course of Dom Ferretti, who is lecturing daily at the Convent of the Sacred Heart, is based upon that given by him each year to the students of the Roman institute. It includes the history of plain-chant, from the time of the Greeks, through the Ambrosian and Gregorian epochs, and down to the day of Palestrina. From Palestrina to the liturgical type of modern composition and modern polyphonic church music, the course is being given by Mr. Nicola Montani, founder and conductor of the Palestrina Choir. The interest in the new movement "away from opera," which is being shown by the large registration for the Manhattanville course from all over America and Canada, is strongly backed by ecclesiastical authority. A foreword, written by the Rt. Rev. Daniel J. Curley, Bishop of Syracuse, to a brochure just published on the subject by the diocesan music commissions, reminds pastors that the recommendations of the "Motu Proprio" are to be observed wherever possible; and that "irrespective of parish conditions," its prohibitions must be respected.

MR. WILLIAM H. ANDERSON'S project for a new and super-secret society, so astringent in its Protestant dryness that the very mouth puckers at it, is an amazing document to issue from any "seclusion," whether of Sing Sing or Bellevue. The "American Prohibition Protestant Patriotic Protective Alliance"

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(may one be permitted to forestall popular facetiousness and call its members the "Pip-pips"?) has many advantages, some of general order, others, on the face of them, rather personal to Mr. Anderson's system of book-keeping. It will have no oath, no incorporation, no membership. Its advisory committee will be secret to the extent that no "anti-Protestant zealot," under any pretext whatsoever, will be able to find out anything about them; and contributions will be accepted "only as outright personal gifts to William H. Anderson." So mysterious and esoteric, so shrouded in Cimmerian darkness, are its operations to be, that like the Billionaires in Mr. Oliver Onions's Little Devil Doubt, it will be just as hard, at the end of a year's activities, to prove that ten million white Protestants have not pledged themselves to its purposes as that one has. Last but not least, its very name provides something more than a mere shibboleth of sobriety. The man who can say "Prohibition Protestant Patriotic Protective Alliance," and get it right the first time, has not only passed the tee-total test with honors, but swings a mean mnemonic.

THE plea for the liberalization of higher education which was contained in recent pronouncements by Dean Woodbridge and President Hibben, is an indication that the barometer of scholarship once more predicts a storm period. Years that have gone tell us that nothing in this world is more difficult than to prescribe for intellectual mastery. We recognize the need for brilliant minds and discerning eyes; we seek greatness and originality in every sort of mental endeavor. But how are we to obtain these things? Obviously not, declares Dean Woodbridge, by assembling a group of young people whose only basis of equality is a degree, and then subjecting them to a regimen of courses. It is easier to shake one's head at pedagogical discipline, than to formulate the correct attitude. Perhaps there is a more helpful suggestion for us than is generally realized in mediaeval university methods, as traced in certain recent studies by French Dominicans.

IN those far-off days, the chief weapon in the battle for intellectual power was discussion. The mediaeval master was respected only because, long after graduation, he was not found wanting in his appreciation of the thought and impulses of the day, and could respond effectively to the eager and sometimes even riotous questioning of his disciples. Few of us, it is to be feared, would survive the strenuous wrestling matches of such arenas. But it is at least conceivable that those who did, might develop a breadth and brawn which would really set them above the crowd. How much life even a breath of such an atmosphere would introduce into our stale and bottle-fed class-rooms, where Sir Oracle too often holds forth on the strength of sheaves of notes gathered in his youth.

EMERGING FRANCE

IT BEGINS to seem—though appearances are still often true to their ancient reputation for deceptiveness—that France is slowly emerging from the mist which has so long veiled its official conduct. M. Caillaux has offered no scintillant financial remedy; he has even taken a stand for a gold bond issue which was formerly talked about by ambitious reformers, and dismissed as dubious. But he has for some reason become master of the situation—he is able to gain support for measures which, as Poincaré suggested them, were greeted with violent opposition. Gone also is the prestige of M. Herriot—the Left bloc is disrupted, the capital levy has been abandoned with a sigh, and even the less practical Socialists are bewildered. The present government subsists because there seems to be no desire to form another. What are the reasons for this? The most reasonable explanation seems to be that the men now in power are the old hands who can find and maintain equilibrium.

The Morocco situation is extremely dangerous. It touches upon so many aspects of foreign affairs that if it were not handled adroitly there might ensue a really formidable explosion. In the first place, Abd-el-Krim is an organizer of genius. His influence with the tribesmen recalls to mind some of the personal power which used to grace the chieftains of Grenada. Having forced Spain to her knees, he has successfully resisted the efforts of Marshal Lyautey to halt the insurrection. The Marshal is, of course, not merely a good soldier but an excellent governor. His wish is not so much to win over the Riff in battle as to preserve order in Morocco. The difficulty created by the Communists in this connection has been one of the surprises of the campaign. But by concentrating the national attention on defeatist propagandists, the government has skilfully won support for the campaign, and strengthened its position with England which, at present, is not inclined to believe that whispers of Sovietism are the most harmonious of sounds. The Communists have been singled out for punishment; and for practically the first time since the war, resentment of revolutionary agitators has grown serious. Other aspects of the Morocco situation are not unadorned with thorns. It will continue to call for the nicest diplomatic talk with strange, shiftless Spain, and with the British who guard Gibraltar. Few would doubt, however, that eventually the war against Abd-el-Krim will be won, and that peace will come back to North Africa.

Desire for this same peace is mingled with shrewd diplomatic manoeuvring in the French reply to the German note on security. It is clear now that all claim to the Rhineland has been abandoned by Parisian statesmen, and that the idea of a neutral zone is clearly seen to be the one way out of a long impasse. But the French have their hearts set on conserving the

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Little Entente. They repudiate the idea of being barred from crossing the frontiers in case of aggression upon Poland. But even if the German proposals should be accepted only with important reservations, the idea underlying them is certainly the soundest and most practical yet devised to safeguard the chances for international good will. Continental statesmen have difficulty in understanding why the United States is not interested in joining the Security Pact. The Dawes Plan is a matter of primary importance to us, and it is by no means certain as yet that it can be successfully carried through. M. Desprets's address to the congress of the International Chamber of Commerce was soberly dubious of whether or not Germany, in carrying out the tasks imposed upon her, might not be doing more to cripple economic Europe than to aid in its restoration. By not barring our approach to a more active coöperation with all honest efforts to establish international security, we might stabilize faith in the Dawes Plan and come to an earlier settlement of the vexing problem of debts.

The French ability to pay us depends primarily upon what kind of foreign policy is eventually established, and upon the conservation of internal order. Recently outrages have generally been suffered to proceed without arousing the government to emphatic protest. The Montmartre massacre, the disturbances in Marseilles, the murder of Marius Plateau—all of these things apparently meant nothing to the French police. But coincident with the evidence of defeatist propaganda in Morocco, has come the first sign of success in the effort of the Royalist leader, Leon Daudet, to establish the belief that his son was killed by enemies. For a long while the ordinary press maintained that young Philippe had committed suicide. Now at length discrepancies in the stories of policemen connected with the lad's death indicate that the account so far trusted has been an imposition concocted by the supposed custodians of order. Should Daudet convince France that his suspicions are just, the result might be a vast accession of sympathy and prestige to the Royalist party. At the present moment that party seems impotent. Daudet's defeat in the senatorial election in the Maine-et-Loire district, long held by the Royalist, Jules Delahaye, is the latest of many blows struck at its prestige. Nevertheless, the brains and industry at its disposal are really so great that some sudden turn in political fortune might make it the talk of the world.

Really, though France is presumably devoting her attention to realities with considerable success, she is an unstable and much harassed land. Financial, political, moral, and religious problems of every sort have been shelved temporarily, and must some day be taken up again. In every case, however, it will be to her lasting advantage to accept Germany as a necessary neighbor and to build up a practical amity that will keep caissons from the Rhine.

MODERN GERMANY'S POETRY

THIS week The Commonweal offers its readers a page of translations from recent German poets in the hope of thus affording at least a glance at the cultural activity of Central Europe. It is, of course, true that a goodly number of lyrics by major poets have long since been adequately put into English, and that in temperament the contemporary German writers do not differ greatly from their predecessors. The aim here is not to proclaim the discovery of something entirely new, but simply to illustrate the fact that those who admire the melody of the opening chorus in the second part of Faust, or the melancholy little songs of Heine, may find out for themselves that present-day Germans have not forgotten the tradition of their art and language. Now, as ever, the road winds through the Black Forest, and the poet listens, as have so many of his distinguished predecessors, to the drip of the water at Schaffausen.

The selection we offer here does not include poems by the better known followers of the "Jungdeutschland" movement. The work of such men as Liliencron, Richard Dehmel, and Stephan Georg has already been widely advertised, nor would it be likely to appeal especially to readers of this magazine. For something like the same reasons there has been no effort to concentrate on the expressionists. We have preferred to let Gottfried Keller typify German-Swiss idealism, which reveals a tranquil enjoyment of nature in something like the spirit of Goethe; to quote from the queer, imagistic miniatures of Christian Morgenstern; and to offer a sample of the exquisitely feminine verse of Ruth Schaumann, whose books have appeared under the discerning auspices of the Theatines. The fact that all the poems chosen for this page have been singled out in Germany by critics and anthologists will serve to indicate that our selection is not wholly whimsical or personal, but guided as well by German taste.

It has long since been recognized by those who care for poetry that lyric expression is as native to the Rhine and the land through which it flows as golden wine or the carving of wood. The chimneys of Stinnes and the statues in the Siegesallee have not robbed the beautiful word "dichter" of its significance. The Germany which has come out of the war is too often identified with a bad boy who is chopping firewood because he broke the parlor window. In all truth, however, it is a rather sorely tried country which has gone along a road fringed with a great deal of earnest spiritual scenery. And so its poets have rediscovered the sacredness of their hearthstones, the mystery of a next-door neighbor, the step of God upon the hills—in short, these modernists are dwelling upon all those things which have been the inspiration of the world's memorable artists since art first became a memory-book of Eden.

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THE POPE AND WORLD PEACE

By L. J. S. WOOD

(This is the last of a series of articles by L. J. S. Wood. It has particular interest, inasmuch as it stresses the ideas of the Holy Father regarding the most practical way of bringing about world peace.—The Editors.)

THE Pope's great desire during this Holy Year—that for which he asks all the faithful specially to pray with him—is peace—the inner peace in men's minds, through which the outer apparatus of peace in the world may be established and made sure. For it, he says, we must go first to the highest source of all—the one reliable source—Almighty God; and the way to reach Him is through prayer.

Prayer is the great spiritual means of obtaining peace. There is a subsidiary but also spiritual effect to the process. The old jubilee meant pardon—wiping off the slate debts and offenses. It means the same today—through penitence and prayer, God cancels offenses against Him. This peace in our souls—charity towards our neighbor—means peace between individuals, classes, and nations. It is the old principle on which the world is run—God does it all, but He uses human means. The Holy Year is one of those things put down here to help us to be good Christians.

Benedict XV recognized, in the early days, that his was a vox clamantis in deserto, but he had the injunction clama ne cesses laid on him, and he went on calling. "Lay aside your mutual purpose of destruction," he said to the peoples at war and to their rulers in 1915; "the equilibrium of the world and the prosperity and assured tranquillity of nations rest upon mutual benevolence and respect for the rights and dignity of others, much more than upon hosts of armed men." And the peace note of August 1917 was the same message with concrete suggestions added.

The allied and associated powers saw things differently; they saw themselves faced with an evil thing; the proclamation of the principle of might over right; there could be no permanent peace, unless and until the wrongness of that principle were proved and confessed by its enunciators on their knees. When that had come to pass, the Holy See still prayed for peace—basing its call now on the resulting state of things and asking its people to pray for help and guidance for the leaders of the nations in council.

That masterly gesture of the blessing urbi et orbi, Pius XI's first message to the world, from the balcony in front of Saint Peter's—the first time for over fifty years—was meant, as he himself interpreted it, "to carry to all the nations and peoples the augury and the message of that universal pacification, for which all long so ardently." Peace, again, was the thought he gave his people to carry in their hearts through the great religious celebration of the Eucharistic Congress in Rome. In a letter to the Archbishop of Genoa on the occasion of the opening of the congress there, the Pope joined himself and the Church to the millions hoping for real progress towards peace. At that congress not only the Allies but Germany and Russia were represented: Monsignor Pizzardo went to Genoa from Rome on special mission; the Archbishop took his place as guest at the banquet given by the King of Italy on board his battleship. Later, even at the risk of offending a great power, the Pope ventured into actualities, suggesting in his letter to Cardinal Gasparri on the occupation of the Ruhr, not only principles, but the line of political action to reach—"that true pacification of the peoples, the necessary condition for economic restoration."

Pius XI, like his predecessor, has not let a consistory or other great occasion pass without vibrant plea for the thing nearest his heart—peace; if every single private address to every single pilgrimage this year were studied, it is safe to say that in not one would it be found lacking.

The world at large may look around and fairly say that still the voice is of one crying in the desert. If that be true of the Pope, he shares the regret with many other statesmen and thinkers who have been and are crying the same thing. Nor, perhaps, when the flower of peace does blossom in the desert, will it be easy to prove that the seed was sown by the Pope's almost entirely subjective appeal. Still, there are signs that it has not been without effect.

One quite noticeable sign is that the world at large has listened. No voice, except an occasional one crazed by war-patriotism, has protested. One of the results of the war, it was confidently asserted when it began, would be the end of any idea of world power—any world influence of the Papacy. It emerged in fact, far stronger than before—among other things, evidenced in the rush of nations for diplomatic representation at the Vatican. The similarity between President Wilson's pronouncements of 1918, culminating in the fourteen points, and the Pope's peace note of the year before, was remarkable. It need not be over-accentuated; it is so natural.

Recently we have seen Catholics and non-Catholics in and about the League of Nations, working for the presence there of an adviser from the Holy See, to whom appeal might be made for the teaching of the Church on moral points at issue. English and other Catholics are now asking whether in the canon law—wherein the world at large found its guidance many centuries ago—the world today may not find useful matter of principle for guidance. One or two of the learned, I believe, are engaged in digging such matter

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out of old decretals for authoritative interpretation in relation to the circumstances of the times. It is even suggested that a reopened Vatican council should tabulate the jus gentium with authority and once for all.

Rome, I think, if asked on that, might well appreciate the compliment, but might for the moment shake its head in doubt—first of the possibility of immediate actuation, secondly of international agreement in acceptance, not so much of the principles—which its canonists and theologians would have no difficulty in uttering—as of their application to the circumstances of the day. Certainly the Holy See would be glad to give all the help its authority and competence allow and enable it to give, to any peace endeavor of the world at large. Moreover, such endeavor as is seen at Geneva and The Hague, is based largely on those principles and considerations which the Holy See itself enunciates.

It is in this substantive agreement that Rome sees hope for the future. If the world at large views with disfavor the principles on which the Papacy envisages peace and founds its exhortations to the faithful, it could, humanly speaking, with its objective action, nullify the Pope's subjective appeals. From such outward evidence as we have, it does seem that rulers and thinkers, except in one or two places too obvious to mention, agree with those principles, welcome them, and make them their own. And the world at large, impressed by the realization that here is one power —which, from the very first, formulated a line of thought and action and stuck to it—is more than ready now to listen to anything it has to say.

Rome, as can be seen from history, will not try to force its views on worldly matters down unsympathetic throats; but it will never cease "calling;" 300,000,000 people will never cease listening, and as far as is in their power, acting and influencing their neighbor in accordance with the call. If too, the world at large, is in sympathy—thinks the principles enunciated are honest, just, and good as well as helpful—then in the long run the world at large can, and will, actuate them. The Pope's appeals, as has been said, are almost entirely subjective. Never, probably, will it be possible to judge how far the good time, when it comes, is due to them. That is immaterial to the Papacy, which, when that happens, will simply give the credit to the highest source of all—Te Deum laudamus, chanted simultaneously in Saint Peter's, and in all the churches of the whole world.

COMMUTING AND INDULGENCES

By CONDÉ B. PALLEN

I AM what is called a commuter, a person who works in the city and sleeps in the country, reads newspapers on trains between times, and sometimes talks to fellow-commuters about the weather, or the wretched service the railroad is giving. Occasionally the conversation strays into other channels. As I happen to be one of the editors of an encyclopedic work on religion, my commuting companions sometimes pump me, out of curiosity, or out of genuine interest, for information upon religious topics, which they think come within my special purview.

Among my commuting friends was a man by the name of Patterson. He was a man of sterling character, a bit dour and thoroughly Calvinistic in religion, in which he stood invincible. He was very frank and direct in his speech—a very commendable trait. He liked me personally, he once told me, but had no use for my "Romanism." Nevertheless we got along fairly well together. He liked to talk religion, on which subject he was both argumentative and tremendously positive. He was like Roderick Dhu—"This rock from its firm base shall fly, as soon as I." Had he been a Catholic, he would have rejoiced in the rock of Peter, with which he would no doubt have identified himself as a constituent part. As it was, he abhorred the rock of Peter, and believed in Scotch granite—for he was of Scotch ancestry. His people had come to Canada, and thence he had come to the United States, but refused to be naturalized. He preferred to remain a Britisher, a thing I have observed in most Britishers in this country, save Irishmen, who hasten to slough the Briton as soon as they land, and become policemen and politicians—of whom they make the best in the world.

Patterson always sought me out on trains—without success, if I saw him first. For I soon learned that religious discussion with him was a waste of breath, and it was religion he always insisted on talking. After two experiences, I laid down the law to him, that I would not argue with him, but that if he really wanted information, I would be pleased to elucidate as best I was able, anything about "Romanism," which might serve to clear up his misunderstandings or his prejudices. One day he plumped down alongside of me.

"Good morning, Mr. Editor," was his greeting. "How is the great work getting along?"

He alluded, of course, to the encyclopedia on which I was engaged.

"Very well, thank you. We have just finished our eighth volume, including the letter 'i'."

"The letter 'i', eh?" he said—and then, "I suppose that takes in the article on indulgences?"

"Naturally," I answered. "Indulgence is spelt with an i, I believe, both in English and in Latin."

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"To be sure, to be sure," said Patterson.

He was a very literal man. He really thought I was trying to tell him how indulgence was spelled. A primrose was a primrose unto him, and nothing more.

"That's the doctrine that Romanism went to smash on," and he looked at me with a saturnine smile.

I could see that he had designs on me that morning. Luther, and the "sale of indulgences" was evidently in his mind, and he was prepared to demolish the "Romanist" before we got into the city. Now one's natural inclination under that sort of provocation by a pugilistic aggressor (a "bruiser," as he is termed in barbaric circles) is to square off and slug him (another unvarnished gladiatorial phrase). But I have had my experience, and even if I battered him into a metaphorical jelly, it would have done him no good, and been a barren victory for me—a mere personal triumph. In such encounters I had learned that to beat a foe into submission, was to make him an even bitterer enemy. Now, Patterson was honest at bottom, and a fighter, who loved battle. He believed thoroughly in his own ignorance—that is, he was supremely convinced that what he didn't know was gospel truth. The only way to win out in such a case is to let your opponent win for you without his realizing it.

"Before going into the question of how 'Romanism' was smashed by the doctrine of indulgences, which involves a good deal of intricate history and some theology, why not ask ourselves what is an indulgence?"

"Well, what is it?" belligerently asked Patterson.

"Suppose you define it," I answered.

"That's easy," he said, "everybody knows what it is. It's buying a permission to commit a sin. You Romanists give the priest some money and he absolves you beforehand."

It was what I had expected, a brutal and vulgar distortion of the fact, but commonly held by non-Catholics who have sucked it into their blood from the tradition of generations. It makes one gasp to hear a sober man in all seriousness attribute so gross a practice to another sober man. There is an explanation. It is that a constantly reiterated statement through generations can become a fixed and ineradicable prejudice—especially when the statement has become a defensive justification of an indefensible religious revolt. The "sale of indulgences" is a popular Protestant tradition, and was the principal cause of the Reformation and of Luther's valiant defiance of Rome. So the doctrine of indulgences has come down in the Protestant mind as the monstrous thing to which my friend Patterson gave utterance. He believed it as he defined it. He had always heard it that way. Like a rust in metal, it had eaten into his religious make-up.

"That's a horrible idea and a monstrous practice, which you have just defined," said I.

"It is," he said. "How do you defend it?"

"I don't," I replied. "I repudiate it as an unmitigated calumny. Just a moment," as he was about to interrupt me. "I am not going to argue with you. I will elucidate the doctrine of indulgences as Catholics hold it, if you care to listen."

"Well, everybody knows that's what an indulgence means. I have heard it that way all my life."

There was a bit of truculence in his tone.

"Did you ever stop to reflect that what you have heard all your life may not be necessarily true? First of all, I would like you to understand that you have insulted me in a way that a Hottentot in the middle of Africa would have answered, if he understood you, by knocking you down. You have attributed to me a belief and a practice that is so atrociously immoral, that you yourself would blush to have perpetrated the accusation, if you realized its blackguardism. But you have no conception of the grossness of the offense, so I will pass it over. Let me try to bring it home to you by a parallel. Suppose I went to the sheriff of this county and, putting a ten dollar bill in his hand, said to him—'Smith, I want to commit a burglary tomorrow,' and Smith would give me the wink—what would you think of it?"

"It would be an outrageous violation of law and decency. No reputable citizen would think of such a thing, no sheriff would tolerate—"

"Just so," I interposed. "But when you tell me that I, as a Catholic, can and do go to a priest and buy a permission to commit a sin tomorrow, you are accusing me of something of even a more heinous character than my hypothetical case of purchasing a licensed immunity to commit a crime from the sheriff. Do you honestly believe that I would be guilty of either?"

Patterson began to look somewhat uneasy.

"Of course I didn't mean anything personal."

"So you thought, but whether you thought so or not, you were personal. I am a Catholic; I believe in indulgences; in fact I am avid of indulgences and try to gain as many as I can. But I will ignore the personal element. Frankly you know nothing about indulgences and your idea of them is a monstrous travesty of the true doctrine. I am not in the least surprised at your notion of them. You were brought up on it, and I fully realize that it is an ingrained prejudice, which is hard to scrape out of the bone."

Patterson was non-plussed. Instead of an argument he had met with a flat accusation, which put him on the defensive, in something of a quandary, for which he was not prepared.

"Do you know that the state of New York grants indulgences?" I asked.

He looked at me in blank amazement.

"You are a lawyer," I went on. "You have no doubt been in court when a judge has sentenced a prisoner?"

He had, often, he said.

"Well, you have no doubt heard a judge say, as he pronounced sentence on the culprit—'I could give you five years—the extreme limit the law allows—but

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I will give you only three.' Or you have heard a judge say to the prisoner—'I could send you to the Island for thirty days, but I will put you on parole.' What has the judge done but remit, in part or in whole, the penalty due to the prisoner's crime? By what authority has the judge mitigated the punishment due the criminal? By the authority of the state of New York. Now that is what the Catholic Church does when she grants an indulgence. She simply remits, in part or whole, the penalty due to a man's sin—the payment of the debt incurred by a man's sin in satisfaction of Divine justice. By what authority does the Catholic Church do this? By the authority conferred upon her by Almighty God. I wouldn't believe in indulgences for a moment, if I did not believe that God Almighty had the power to do this, and if He had not conferred that power upon His Church. Christ, who was God, instituted that Church, and he explicitly and solemnly conferred the power upon her to bind and loose. 'All power is given me in Heaven and on earth. . . As I am sent, I send you. . . Whatsoever you shall bind on earth, shall be bound in Heaven. . . .'

"To pay the judge of the civic tribunal to remit a penalty, in whole or in part, would be a monstrous civic and social offense, a corruption and a debauchery of justice. Would it not be more monstrous to seek to corrupt and debauch the tribunal of conscience, the sacred tribunal of binding and loosening which Christ Himself established? And do you imagine that the Catholic Church, which holds herself the custodian of that tremendous and sacrosanct power, would approve or condone the purchase of a permission to commit sin? You must admit that the Catholic Church is not such a fool as to stultify herself and destroy the efficacy of Christ's grant of binding and loosening by corruptly selling it.

"And here let me say something that is, no doubt, in your mind—that there have been abuses of indulgences throughout the centuries. There have been such abuses from the beginning, for there have been from the beginning weak, ignorant and corrupt men—but if you will take the trouble to read the history of indulgences, you will find that the Church has been constantly legislating against and suppressing such abuses. I recommend to you the article on indulgences in the Catholic Encyclopedia. It will be a good beginning. At least give yourself a chance to straighten out the crooked notion of indulgences that you gave me, and you will perhaps learn that 'Romanism' was not smashed on the doctrine of indulgences."

Our train drew into the terminal of the Grand Central Station. Patterson lost himself in the crowd as we climbed the ramp from the lower level. I said to myself as he disappeared—"What a terrible Catholic he would make if he ever became one! He would want to go to Rome to tell the Pope how to run the Church." There have been Catholics of that kind.

THE LOST ART OF READING

By THOMAS L. MASSON

RECENTLY I passed an evening in the company of a select group of highbrows. Right in the midst of it, when we were all enjoying ourselves as much as possible in these doubtful circumstances, one member insisted on reading aloud a long poem of Browning's —Karshish, the Arab Physician. Our reader was a public lecturer, and read it well.

The process was painful. On general principles, I have always thought a pogrom should be instituted against all people who read poetry aloud. When it is their own, they should be chloroformed. When it is anybody else's at random, they should be locked up in the cooler until they repent. When it is Browning's, they should be boiled in oil.

After our reader had finished, the ensuing and deadly pause was punctured by one victim, who sighed —"I didn't understand a word of it."

We echoed his sentiments. The man who had inflicted it upon us apologized, and we all agreed that never again should any poetry be read aloud at subsequent meetings.

For days thereafter, the dark shadow of that reading lingered. Not a glimmer of the meaning of the poem had penetrated. Yet, strange to say, the total effect, or impression, I had received was almost overpowering. It was as if I had been bathed in some rarefied fluid, all of which had instantly evaporated, yet had not left me the same. I was consumed by a curiosity to know what that poem really meant.

This cumulative pressure finally burst—and I found myself searching in my library, only to discover that some fiend in human shape had borrowed my Browning. I hurried into town and bought one. I clutched at every word of that poem as a drowning man is said to clutch at straws. Even now, having read it over and over and over, there are still new discoveries in it all the time. Standing on that poem, as a kind of solid foundation, one could reach out and touch all the good literature in the world.

Then the horrible thought came over me that I had forgotten how to read. The more I meditated about this, the more I saw that it was so.

My next experiment was with a review of a theatrical performance, published in my daily paper, and written by a man whose name was familiar to me, but about whom I knew nothing. Neither was I interested in the play. But I read the piece as a kind of test. It was easy enough reading. The man did not like the play, and said so. That was all there was to it, apparently. And ordinarily I should have grabbed one or two sentences to get what was favorable or unfavorable, and thrown down the paper. Now I read it over a second time.

I discovered that the writer had taken this play as

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a cue to say something which really revealed a fundamental conception of life and art combined. I read it over again and could not detect a superfluous word in it. Furthermore, the man, probably working at white heat, and in less than 1,000 words, had expressed a certain kind of important truth better than I had ever seen done before. I read it a third time, and got still more. Then I inquired about the author, and found he had devoted his life to the study of his subject—that he had produced several books which were authoritative, and—this is the important part—that he was just quietly, without ostentation or parade, living up to what he believed—and what he believed was the result of a lifetime of hard labor.

The lost art of reading! What chance, I wonder, is there for us to recover it?

MARY'S MINNESINGER

By THOMAS M. SCHWERTNER

THE DEATH of M. André Caplet in Paris, last April, removed from the musical world an undisputed master, who had done the present jazzing and pleasure-mad generation of Frenchmen the necessary service of teaching it to sing and appreciate good music—not only in the church but also in the theatre and the home. If we remember that since the war the social trend has been overpoweringly away from the home and the churches, and toward the theatre and the concert halls, it will be apparent at once what a really actual mission he carried on, with the highest religious enthusiasm.

André Caplet commended himself to the public by the loyalty he displayed all through his career, in never disowning the inspiration and influence of Claude Debussy, whose friend and favorite disciple he had been. Whatever technical faults he committed, whatever artistic hesitations his genius succumbed to, genuine music lovers willingly condoned, because of the fine spirit he had shown—especially in his earlier days—towards his master's memory. And when his own voice became strikingly articulate and undeniably distinct, Caplet needed no introduction or commendation to the critics.

The last, and perhaps the greatest—certainly the most ambitious—achievement of Caplet, is his Le Miroir de Jesus, which was first heard in Paris in the Vieux Colombier, on May 1, 1923. In answer to the insistent demands of music lovers, it was repeated three times immediately after. His two characteristic traits stand out here to the best advantage. For Caplet could never forget, even in his most secular music, the faith he had imbibed in his own native Brittany—a faith that had impelled him, like Gounod, to turn his eyes for a time in the direction of the sanctuary. And he could never discard a love for the dramatic in music—especially after the war, in which he served with distinction, winning two citations for wounds and valor—the Croix de Guerre, the cross of the Legion of Honor—and the undying love of the poilus of the second cavalry, whose first-lieutenant he had been.

If the inspiration of the Miroir is to be found in a glowing faith, then its peculiar form must be sought in mediaeval ideals and models. For it is a frankly mediaeval theme, familiar to all who know the early history of Franciscanism with its Speculum Perfectionis, and the Tumbler of Our Lady—and even the writings, so full of quaint mediaeval conceits, of Saint Francis de Sales. For Our Lady is conceived here as the mirror, portraying as fully and faithfully as human can ever hope to do, the joys, sorrows and triumphs of her son, Our Savior. Without the softening screen of pure humanity in her whom the middle-ages loved to salute as "Our Lady of Light," the story of Christ's earthly life would be all too bright and pathetic for our poor weak eyes. The Miroir de Jesus is the rosary in music. It is divided into three parts, even as the rosary itself. Each mirror is a complete creation in itself—though the three triptics are closely united, not only by reason of a dominant idea, but also by the general leitmotif.

Each triptic is introduced by a prelude where the rich inventiveness and fullness of Caplet's genius appear vividly. Then, as in most mediaeval plays, and those oratorios frankly based upon them, the title is announced unblushingly by a trio of children's voices—which are silent in the sorrowful mysteries, for the simple reason that their timbre is too frail and impersonal to depict the agonies of the Passion. The words of the libretto are sung by a mezzo (in the Paris rendition, it was the famous diva, Madame Croiza) on whom falls the burden of the work. At the beginning and end of each mystery, as also at frequent and telling intervals, a choir of women's voices, interweaves significant Latin words—such as Ave Maria, Magnificat, Lumen ad revelationem gentium, and Alleluia; with sighs and subtle tones in the sorrowful mysteries.

Caplet knew full well that such a thing as voluntary renunciation was necessary in the glorification of Him who gave up His heavenly home to tarry for a while with His fallen children. Hence, with fine taste and artistic delicacy he deliberately put aside all musical resources save stringed instruments and two harps. A veritable miracle of technique was the result.

This same spirit of renunciation—in the theological sense of a virtue—is seen in the collaboration of M.

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Henri Gheon, who, while he cures many with his medical skill, saves still more by his homely mediaeval remedies of miracle plays and religious poems. In the fullest sense of the word, the Miroir is the joint labor of Gheon and Caplet, who have merged their art in such wise that no man will ever be able to divorce them without destroying a superbly fine masterpiece. What is lacking in the literary perfection of the libretto (and no one can deny the "holy violences" done to rhyme and metre in the poems) is covered over with abounding charity by the enveloping softness of Caplet's music. But he, also, took liberties with the rules of harmony—as when he heaped together a succession of four-beat and five-beat notes (especially in the second Miroir) that produce dissonances which, from the words of the text, can be seen to have been intended and premeditated by Caplet as a means of bringing out the idea of pain and universal upheaval of man's emotions by the Crucifixion and what preceded it.

A similar artistic artifice—which never strikes one as having been introduced solely for dramatic effect, though that undoubtedly was the prime reason—appears in the Coronation, which is the longest and, in many respects, the most striking tour de force in the entire Miroir. Ingeniously, after an outburst of the orchestra which puts one into the right frame of mind, the singing of the voices is suddenly and abruptly changed to chanting. This easily suggests the liturgy with which we are all familiar, and hints at the heavenly pageantry of Mary's apotheosis. Above the strains of the orchestra, the regular plain-song tones sound for all the world like the far-off chant of the angels, gathered around the feet of her who was being crowned their queen.

Le Miroir de Jesus is one of the great musical achievements of our day, especially of a religious kind, because of the unity in its conception, the presence of outstanding and clearly defined ideas, the sanity of its sentiment, its religious inspiration, the poise, equilibrium and restraint of its music. Despite the abundance of modern musical arabesques, there is a seductive simplicity, not only in the separate movements, but also in the measured and artistic development of the theme. There is a surprising variety of effects—a fullness, roundness, picturesqueness, pathos even, which has not been equaled in any religious composition of our time. There is nothing suggestive of profane sentiment, earthly love, empty pomposity, or vagrant refinement. It is as near a musical meditation as we can hope to find in the world of sound. The Paris critics spoke of it as a "musical fresco," simple, chaste, other-worldly. If Fra Angelico, with all his defects, painted scenes which he must have witnessed during his meditations upon the beauties of heaven, then indeed, Caplet, gives back to us in the Miroir the rapturous music he must have heard when telling off his beads at Mary's feet.

A COMMUNICATION

WASMANN AND EVOLUTION

Rochester, N. Y.

TO the Editor:—I have been somewhat loath to attempt to encroach on what, from the very outset, seemed to be so manifestly the Catholic layman's choicest literary preserve; and although I had marveled at the daring trespass of other clergymen, I think I should not have presumed to intrude, were it not that I believe that misleading notions, especially on leading questions, should be corrected at any cost.

I have noticed that in several numbers of your esteemed paper—which opens up to us a new Land of Promise—you seem to take an especial pride in referring to some Catholic priests as distinguished champions of the Darwinian hypothesis; and as the mere enlistment of such names in such a cause, is apt, in many quarters, to be regarded as an argument in favor of the theory—regardless of the soundness of the reasoning which led them to espouse it—I think especial pains should be taken that all dust be carefully wiped from off the highly sensitive plates of such docile intelligences. Perhaps the worst curse of our age—though we are not keenly alive to it—is names and numbers. A plebiscite is the final determinant of public opinion on all important questions. A majority vote is always victorious over logic, reason, and common sense. False weights and measures are corrected by the government; but against fictitious standards of value or of character, we are too often at the mercy of the mob. To give a good name is sometimes as dangerous as to give a bad one; the injury, however, reacting not on the nominee but on the public at large. The chaotic, and at the same time turbulent, condition of thought just now so prevalent on the question of evolution is due largely to this confusion of values in many fields. In the frenzied state of the public mind at the present time, men are not ruled by reason but by prejudice; nor has there been a period since the four evangelists of evolution, Darwin, Spencer, Huxley, and Haeckel, set out to convert the world, when bias has not strangled reason, and when through its subtle influence men have not mistaken the phosphoric gleams of pseudo-science for real sunlight.

It is, of course, a somewhat odious task to undertake to dim the lustre of great names or to strip them of their splendor; but the issues at stake are too momentous and the consequences too far-reaching to permit personal considerations to withhold the comment that is requisite to arrive at a proper estimate of true values. Moreover, when Catholic clergymen deliberately take their stand on the side of unproved theories fraught with grave significance, they must be fully conscious that they are inviting, nay daring, the full fire of legitimate criticism.

On more than one occasion, The Commonweal has referred to Canon Dorlodot and Father Wasmann as distinguished scientists, and at the same time Catholic priests, who have adopted the Darwinian hypothesis. Of Canon Dorlodot I know absolutely nothing and consequently am not competent to speak. Of Father Wasmann, my own experience, I think, fully justifies me in saying that I am perfectly qualified to form a just estimate.

The great difficulty with Father Wasmann's position lies not in his name but in his arguments; and no one has done so much to discredit faith in those arguments as Father Wasmann himself. Some years ago, in the pages of the American Catholic Quarterly Review, your correspondent criticized sharply and severely—but at the same time respectfully—a volume published

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by the distinguished Jesuit embodying his beliefs, his arguments, and his researches in the field of evolution, entitled The Problem of Evolution. I pointed out the weakness in Father Wasmann's position and the shortcomings in his arguments. Here, then, was an excellent opportunity for him to reinforce his position and demolish my arguments. If his doctrine was unassailable he might have scored heavily in its favor.

Father Wasmann did reply. What is more, his reply was introduced with a great flourish of trumpets. Yea, it ran serially through several numbers of a noted American review. But strange to say, throughout it all, he never attempted to meet a single one of my arguments dealing with his many contentions. Like the young lady in the couplet, Father Wasmann went out to swim, but took special care not to go near the water. Discretion he evidently found to be the better part of valor; and no one will ever learn from his reply what was the nature even of the objections which I had brought against his proofs for evolution. At the close he announced that he had examined forty-three pages of my book and fifty-four yet remained, which it would require too much time to refute. The joker lay in the fact that it was precisely on page forty-three my arguments began with the heading—"Father Wasmann's Descent of Man," everything prior to this having been merely expository; so that his trumpeted reply was a mere tilting with windmills. To this day, as far as I know, my strictures on all his contentions remain unanswered.

Here, briefly, are a few of the arguments which Father Wasmann found it convenient to ignore—

Father Wasmann's theory of man's descent was, that, instead of ape or monkey as ancestor, man had a special ancestor of his own, especially created and afterwards developed into the being from which the parent of the human race was evolved; and this, he claimed, was in perfect harmony with the Catholic philosophy of the simplicity of the human soul.

My criticism here was, that inasmuch as, according to Christian philosophy, the soul is the principle of life—primum principium vitae, as Saint Thomas has it—in Father Wasmann's human ancestor the human soul must, therefore, have been introduced into a being already endowed with the life principle. What then takes place between those two souls? Absorption of one by the other? Coalescence? Union or mere joining together? Annihilation of the first by the Creator to make room for the second? And what then becomes of the simplicity of the soul? This theory was really the central thought in Father Wasmann's book. Did Father Wasmann meet the issue? Did he attempt a reply? So far from it, that no one will ever know from reading Father Wasmann's reply that such an objection has ever been raised. Father Wasmann on this point has been blind, deaf and dumb.

Father Wasmann gave one proof from his own special study of ants and cockroaches, and this an indirect one, in favor of evolution, viz.—that, since, for some of his fossil ants no predecessors could be found in the tertiary amber of the Baltic and Sicily, the conclusion must be that away back in paleozoic times they must have been evolved from some common ancestor with those of the black beetle. This was his only proof from his own studies.

To this I gave three distinct answers based on the testimony of Darwin himself, and Herbert Spencer, regarding the utter worthlessness of proofs taken from paleontology, because of the unreliability of the geological record as a witness. Father Wasmann must have found the reply overwhelming, for he has kept at a safe distance from it, never even alluding to it. I also pointed out to him how Haeckel, whom he was supposed to be combatting, following the same line of argument, could retort with a tu quoque, by telling Father Wasmann—since we fail to find any traces of the fossil human species, while we find fossil apes and prosimiae in abundance—it must necessarily follow that man must be descended from a common ancestor with these animals. Father Wasmann would thus find himself hoisted with his own petard. Again Father Wasmann is deaf and dumb and blind. No one will ever learn from his rejoinder that such questions have ever been hinted at by me.

Father Wasmann in his dearth of arguments for evolution took pains to drag up from the past the ancient suggestion of Geoffrey St. Hilaire, which had long been the sheet-anchor of the early Darwinians, and which was known to them as the argument from embryology. Father Wasmann undertook to rehabilitate it under the name of the biogenetic principle, claiming that the whalebone whale must be an evolution of the toothed whale.

I pointed out the gaps in the logic of all contention so far on this head, and even reconstructed for him the argument in the only form which anyone with even a remnant of respect for logic could tolerate. I also showed him how the argument itself flatly contradicted his own principle of advance in the various stages of evolution. Father Wasmann is again blind, dumb, and deaf. His readers will never learn from him that any objection of this nature has ever been dreamed of.

I showed at length, that contrary to Father Wasmann's belief that advance in evolution from the simple to the complex, was constant and continuous, the late Professor Huxley not only held but proved conclusively from paleontology that progressive modification had not taken place in the past, and that his observations had convinced him that the earlier members of any long continued group were not more generalized than the later ones. Again Father Wasmann is absolutely silent.

Now, had Father Wasmann made no attempt at reply, it might, perhaps, be claimed by those who knew no better, that he regarded my objections as trivial and not worth answering; but inasmuch as he made so elaborate an effort and throughout it all, studiously avoided even a hint that might let his readers know that such objections had been made at all, the only legitimate conclusion is that he must have found them unanswerable. They all deal with issues vital to the subject and fatal to the theory if not refuted. Father Wasmann resorted to every known means to discredit myself, but he dared not meet the arguments. His pamphlet is yet on the catalogue of a St. Louis publishing house. The pamphlet form of my strictures has long been out of print; but I imagine there are still enough copies of the original article in the American Catholic Quarterly Review extant for anyone who wishes to examine the problem.

We are all ready to accept evolution—monkeys and all—when it comes to us with arguments that compel reason; but when we are expected to join the ranks, just because the mob is howling for it, and the rabble is running riot in its behalf, the while the arguments of the savants are an outrage on logic and an insult to human reason, we must answer with a firm non sequitur in every application of the phrase. It is safe to say that not 1 percent of the scribes who fill the press with claptrap and who assail Bryan, understand even the first principles of the theory for which they are clamoring. Wisely or foolishly, England has given a tomb to Charles Darwin in Westminster Abbey, and every species of propaganda—fair and foul—has since been requisitioned to justify her action.

REV. SIMON FITZSIMONS.

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THE PLAY

By R. DANA SKINNER

Gilbert Without Sullivan

EVEN the serious minded Stagers have brought their season to a close with a shout of laughter. They have crowned the nostalgia of The Blue Peter and the morbid tension of Rosmersholm with a spirited and mirthful performance of W. S. Gilbert's Engaged, with appropriate music selected from here, there, and elsewhere by Brian Hooker—a delightful evening for any season of the year, hot or cold.

Of course it is hard to think of Gilbert without Sullivan. But here at least is a clear case where the famous librettist emerges in triumphant solitude and winks at you broadly. The incidental music helps—helps greatly—but the libretto is plainly the masterpiece of the evening, and its gay shafts of wit, satire and burlesque strike forth boldly and unfettered.

It is anything but a painful task to follow the flitting fortunes of Cheviot Hill, that "young man of property" whose smugness is matched only by his fatal inability not to propose to every young lady he meets. Before the last act, he is quite the most engaged young man one would be apt to meet—not to mention the possible entanglement of a Scotch marriage. It is all very trivial, thoroughly amusing, and an excellent burlesque of the romantic temperament entertainingly modified by a Scotch purse.

The program does not reveal just where Brian Hooker picked up the musical score, save to say that it was partly from the rich storehouse of a collection he has been making for many years. But the result is most gratifying. Without attaining that extraordinary aptness of a Sullivan score, the music is graceful, sprightly and rippling. With two notable exceptions, it suffers from interpretation by impromptu voices drilled for the occasion rather than for a life career. But the spirit of the ensemble is so energetic and so informal that you quickly lose sight of minor defects.

The individual performances are nearly all good, and several are exceptional. J. M. Kerrigan carries the burden of Cheviot Hill with a boldly fatuous exaggeration. His sentimental weakness soon becomes most plausible, most earnest, and most distressing, paraded with a becoming solemnity. Mr. Kerrigan has a good Gilbertian diction, and if he could only match it with a voice of reasonable proportions, we would cheerfully nominate him for that proposed permanent Gilbersullivan theatre.

The male honors, however, must go unhesitatingly to Jay Fassett as "that gentleman from London," Belvawney. In this singular combination of Svengali and a polished mountebank, he gives a performance of superlative precision and zest, with a diction to warm the ear drums. Belvawney, be it known, is the sinister character who is to receive £1,000 a year so long as his magical influence prevents Cheviot Hill from actually marrying. His magic power lies in his eyes. He has only to concentrate his fearful glances on the bridge of Cheviot's nose to reduce that young man to inept agony. But fate has mysterious ways, and the accident of an eye infection and the need of wearing dark-green glasses, deprive Belvawney of his power at the most critical moment. Here you have a character of true Gilbertian proportions, and Mr. Fassett fills it, every inch.

Rosamond Whiteside, as one of Cheviot's numerous fiancées, does admirably. Miss Whiteside is another of those rare artists who understands that even the best Gilbert lyric is worthless if you can't hear the words. This would seem to be super-obvious, but it has wholly escaped many actors with really fine voices and sharpened comedy sense. To most of our present-day musical talent, a song is no more than a vocal opportunity. They do not grasp it as a vehicle for conveying an idea. They are more interested in the sound of their voices than in the clearness of their words. This may suffice for the average musical play, where the lyrics generally border on idiocy—but it is fatal to Gilbert. Miss Whiteside has a good voice, clear and ingratiating, but she is willing to subordinate it at all times to words—an heroic sacrifice which produces unexpectedly charming results.

Antoinette Perry as Belinda Treherne, "the lady in distress," also contributes good entertainment; and Dollé Gray, as the mercenary maid, makes the utmost of a small part. Miss Marjorie Vonnegut, as the lowland lassie, shows a resiliency rather surprising to anyone who saw her rather heavy performance as the wife in The Blue Peter. She is not, however, a thoroughly nimble artist.

In a season singularly crowded with revivals, this performance easily takes a high rank. It is the kind of work for which permanent groups like the Stagers are peculiarly well suited. It recalls especially the Provincetown revival of Fashion a year ago, and the Neighborhood's more recent revival of Sheridan's Critic. The present day effectiveness of such pieces is a tribute to the permanent values beneath all the surface changes in theatrical art.

When Choosing Your Plays

Aloma of the South Seas—A grotesque and uninteresting play.

Cæsar and Cleopatra—A splendid production scenically, but unevenly acted.

Desire Under the Elms—Eugene O'Neill at his most morbid repast.

Is Zat So?—The triumph of two characters and a very human theme over a poor plot. A splendid comedy.

Tell Me More!—A Gershwin score—praise enough.

The Fall Guy—A good comedy of the slumming type.

The Garrick Gaieties—A new review by the junior Guild members.

The Gorilla—An entertaining piece of melodramatic hokum.

The Grand Street Follies—The annual frolic of the Neighborhood Playhouse.

The Poor Nut—An amusing summer evening's entertainment.

The Student Prince—One of the best of the musical plays.

They Knew What They Wanted—A play with a tragic beginning and a fine ending.

What Price Glory—A very fine, though not a great play.

White Cargo—A morbid story of the white man's degeneration in the tropics. Mostly unrelieved gloom.

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POEMS OF GERMANY

TRANSLATED BY GEORGE N. SHUSTER

Evensong

Music, murmur me to slumber;
Take the task from out my hands.
Gentle sheep, of sheep the mothers,
Climb my spirit's pasturelands.
Music mingle strong with sweet,
Murmur, lay me at God's feet.

Dusk-time crimson, sickled moon
Arm on arm the spaces view.
In the mountainous sky's valleys
Gleams a star, and glimmer two.
Music, bid your bud-filled loom
Weave all beauty to its bloom.

Willows tremble in the twilight
By a far-off wildling stream.
My heart's fitful beating plunges
In the long breath of a dream.
Music, murmur—'tis His will
Life should listen and be still.

RUTH SCHAUMANN.

At Night

Friendly eyes, my windows wee,
Could I weigh your steady glow?
Count your pictures as they go?
Darkened—too soon—you must be.

When the day-worn eyelids slumber,
Dimmed your fires, the soul will swoon—
Fumbling strip her wander-shoon,
Stretch upon her pallet's umber.

She sees only twin sparks hover
Like twin starlets, inward seen,
Till they tremblingly careen
As if hushed by winging plover.

Now I walk the fields of night
Companioned with each glooming flame—
Drink, eyes, what your lashes frame
Of the world's gold waste of light!

GOTTFRIED KELLER.

First Snow

From sombre silver distance moving
Lithely a doe
Steps through the winter glade
With cautious, cautious hoofs approving
The pure, cool, freshly driven snow.
I think of you—exquisite maid.

CHRISTIAN MORGENSTERN.

Home-Land

Ever
When swirl and rumble
Bewilder me in cities strange,
My heart steals back to you,
Blest land—home.
Multitudinous your hills
Rise and glisten before me.
Encamped on your shoulders,
Over the forests massed,
Are towering clouds.
They stretch out, sun themselves,
Blink at the ploughmen,
Watch their beards in the lake—
Dreaming, they move not.
Great birds
Waver before them,
Surrendering to the winds,
And linger
Like heavenly lanthorns
In the eternal peace.

JAKOB KNEIP.

The Bridge

Streams would wander, bridges stay;
Together shores desire to be.
Bears me this footpath faithfully,
Or go my steps to the sea astray?

Ripples sing and the bridge declares—
Has road or cross-road ever mattered?
On the sea all stones are scattered
And streamward every traveler fares.

WILLIBALD KÖHLER.

Prayer

Sprinkle my days with hunger, Lord.
Lest sleek and filled I sleep.
Give me such foes as love a sword
And press me up the steep.

For laughter and song unbind my limbs
And wing me for the flight;
Hang Thou my laurels—with my whims—
Still higher in the height.

GUSTAV FALKE.

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BOOKS

Mrs. Meynell and Her Literary Generation, by Anne Kimball Tuell. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.50.

THIS book represents a very thorough research, and a power of distinguished appreciation not unworthy of its exquisite subject herself. Miss Tuell is an American—in her own words, "a stranger of another country and another creed." But she has produced so fine a commentary on Mrs. Meynell's achievement that it is hard to see what there is left for any ensuing book to say.

It would be misleading, as well as a little ludicrous, to say that the work constitutes a defense. But at least it performs the service, badly needed among American readers, of filling in the lacunae of the Meynell tradition, and presenting this phenomenal woman of letters in her living proportions. She had a rare and salient personality, a beautiful and intrepid mind, a pointed and unique art; yet, among us—whom, incidentally, she loved—she has suffered curiously. Her prose is read mainly by the super-elect of the academic circle, and even her poetry, though better known, has only a limited public. There has been a general sheering away from her work, a general feeling that her themes are remote and superfine, and that they suffer from the devitalizing touch of preciosity. There may be a certain amount of honest acquaintance with her work, and honest insensitiveness to it, behind this very unjust judgment—but what is mainly behind it is simply lack of any acquaintance whatsoever.

For concern with mere literary surfaces represents that attitude at the opposite pole from Mrs. Meynell's. The pugnacious Henley, subdued for once, said of her—"Her mind naturally wanders among the deep and essential things of life." Backward and forward from Henley ranges a list representing greatness itself, eagerly offering its praise—Ruskin, Rossetti, Thompson, Meredith, Patmore, Tennyson—these names alone should convince us that she had something to give besides literary prettiness. She had. She had sincerity so great that it in itself amounted to genius. It controlled her whole life, her personal contacts, her literary opinions, her social conscience, her religion. It spoke in that quality of hers which cherishers of the "precious" theory would find so confounding if they bothered to read her pages—her impatient and everlasting common sense. It dictated her artistic creed. That creed, in contrast to the decadent's preoccupation with manner for manner's sake, represents a quintessential preoccupation with content. With even more than the artist's usual joy in utterance, she has yet fixed it as the law of superior utterance that it shall subdue itself humbly and austerely to its subject. In prose and poetry alike, she set herself strictly against the smallest wayward richness of speech. For her, rightness could be attained only by unceasing vigilance of the inward eye. She cared for the word, because all artists must; but also, and especially, because it is that on which the thought depends in its passage from soul to soul.

The temptation is heavy to hunt down favorites in The Rhythm of Life, or Ceres' Runaway, to riot among her imperishable felicities of phrase, to quote and analyze to the heart's content. But perhaps it is wiser here to forego the literary method, and to follow instead the outline of her life. Its chief revelation is of a quality which—as in many another genius, has been a running-mate of the instinct for reality—high vitality. Those readers who know what a choice childhood she passed in England, and Switzerland, and Italy, under the double influence of beauty and culture; those who have already heard of her mother, gifted in music and art; of her father, renowned as a connoisseur; of her sister, early famed as a painter—all such will be ready with an affirmation of the celebrated Meynell fastidiousness. Fastidious she unquestionably was, and possessed of a celestial rectitude of taste—the fine lady in letters, beyond a doubt. But those who are misled by popular word associations into expecting something in the line of an elegant female, are due for an amusing shock. This fine lady had an exceptionally stout, two-handed grip on life, and a seemingly infinite capacity for taking things on.

Married at twenty-six, she became the mother of eight children. Her gracious hospitality, her gift for friendship, make a tradition. Material for another tradition, according to Miss Tuell, resides in numberless unrecorded acts of private goodness, and in that larger, more impersonal charity which forbade her to dismiss for a moment, "the background to our hurried life, of poverty unchallenged, of unemployment and unrelief." There were her formal convictions, religious and social. An early convert to Catholicism, she was unflagging in practical devotion during a lifetime of celebrity which presented uncountable occasions for the instruction of general opinion, the giving of lay counsel, the bearing of testimony. Though she detested "movements," she was a suffragist. Miss Tuell calls her socialist also; but it is hard to discover what the term implies, besides the opinions which she warmly defended in connection with her feminism—"equal pay" for the sexes, "the Frenchwoman's right to a revision of the marriage law," "the frequent necessity of independent calling of the married woman," "dowers for poor brides," "daughters' portions," "provision for the independent dignity of the wife."

Lastly, there is her professional career. She was no dreamer, shaping reveries in an ivory tower—she was a journalist. From her middle twenties onward, for more than twenty-five years, she was connected with the press; for a large part of that time she produced regularly, under pressure and in incredible abundance. The essays of her slender, final, editions are mainly gleamings from these years. The list of publications which contain her work makes one blink. For twelve years she "contributed prodigally under various names," to her husband's Merry England. The Pall Mall Gazette carried a weekly column from her for ten years. She had a long connection with Henley's coruscant and devastating National Observer.

There is more besides. There is her poetry, a small but complete world which has been saluted by the masters. There are eleven additional volumes—translations, collaborations, anthologies, monographs, critical and devotional. And there are thirty-two critical introductions to the volumes of others. When one considers the circumstances under which a large part of this writing was necessarily done, one feels that the example of Dickens, composing in a jolting carriage at midnight, fades into nothingness. "She has written with scorn of such literary ladies as cannot pursue their calling 'with an avalanche of children pouring down the staircase.' To the rumble of that avalanche she wrote those delicate essays which suggest deliberation and fastidious leisure."

Her range was as astonishing as her output. The topics already suggested do not even make a beginning. She was, for instance, an art critic, whose work Sargent esteemed enough to wish her to write the introduction to his reproduced sketches. She was a commentator on child-action and psychology, so acute

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and original that the Pall Mall Gazette affirmed—"It may almost be said of Mrs. Meynell that she has newly created the child literature." To many she is known only as a critic of letters—excusably, in view of the amount and excellence of her work in this field, and the dazzling variousness of her literary scholarship. Another group of admirers chiefly loves her "descriptive impressionism;" and in truth, her descriptive world alone would be world enough for a superlatively fine essayist. Miss Tuell's characterization of that unique response to natural things—to colors, to pastures, and winds, and bird voices, and hidden waters—to earthly scents and roving seeds, to changes of season and of landscape, to light in its million variations, to constellations and grasses, to the interpretations of earth which come through bare hands and bare feet, to reeds and poplars and rain—is particularly beautiful—"One gets from her words a poignancy as of an uncorrupt noble savagery, seldom indeed to be recaptured among our urban habits and satieties. Or rather, perhaps, we might say that she has managed to preserve the stringency of the child's experience, which we faintly remember as now torment and now delight."

Even this is not all. But it is enough. No wonder Meredith called it "princely journalism!" The hard vigor of Mrs. Meynell's intellectual life, the heartening vigor of her humanity, the depth and unspoken passion of her religious experience, the breadth and keenness of her registry of values—these, alone, would assuredly have cohered into something plainly admirable. But since they are combined with a conscious, heroically sincere art, it is wiser to forfeit hope of a widespread immediate appreciation, and to confess the paradox. The attention of the general reader attempting Mrs. Meynell will probably continue for some time to be attracted, not by spirit or content, but by a manner too exact, too stripped of irrelevancies, too intrinsically appropriate, to be grasped with absolute ease from moment to moment. An appreciation of her strength and her art will grow up among us only gradually, "little cell by little cell," through the inheriting years.

MARY BARBARA KOLARS.

The Literary Essay in English, by Sister M. Eleanore. New York: Ginn and Company. $1.48.

ROVING in an adventurous spirit through the fairyland of books is always certain of bringing a guerdon to the knight errant. There will be the main-traveled roads, to be sure—and the landmarks will be homely and familiar, and one will greet them gladly for the old friends they are. But by-lanes will call one, too—and no lanes at all, but a sunny spot seen afar off, or a little clearing right under one's eyes. I am sure that roaming in bookland is a first-class adventure for Sister Eleanore—and none the less so, of a truth, for her intimate knowledge of the way. For the ways are perilous enough, even when one has eyes that can see, as she has. But in her sally forth, she set a goal for her effort and reached it. She was on the track of the essay in English literature, and has trailed it down its labyrinthin ways and made it hers. The study of her joyous saunterings she now gives to us in a volume called The Literary Essay in English.

What is an essay? We all think we know. Some of us, doubtless, do. But to write down the explanation in the style of the lexicographer gives a very wrong conception of the thing. It is like trying to present a logical definition of moonlight, or of a tenor's voice, or of the sweetness of a child's smile. Perfection of style, she tells us, must be there —and self-completion, and the author's personality—and these are much. So I think the writer will agree with me when I suggest that the usual general article on free trade, for example, is not within the scope of her study; nor does her book glance at a dissertation on the theory of relativity, or a thesis on the orbit of mercury. These informatory papers are useful—but they are not essays. They derive from anyone save the great ancestor of the essay, Michel de Montaigne. For the modern essay became a fact when the Frenchman published the first volume of his Essais in the year 1580. It is from this point of departure that the author seeks out the essayists in English.

It is a long list. Bacon, Ben Jonson, John Selden, Thomas Fuller, James Howell, Sir Thomas Browne, Milton, Samuel Johnson, Steele, Addison, Goldsmith, Lamb, Thackeray, Stevenson, Washington Irving, Holmes—these are but a few of the worthies that yield themselves and their art to Sister Eleanore's analysis. Mark Twain is here, too, and so is Francis Thompson, as well as Alice Meynell and Agnes Repplier. Do you fancy Stephen Leacock? Sister Eleanore entertainingly treats you to her fancies on this Canadian humorist. Are you old-fashioned enough to be a devotee of Walter Pater? If you are, perhaps the author's vignette of this Oxonian stylist will look like your own. Is Chesterton one of your gods? Sister Eleanore gives you her ideas of his right to sit on high Olympus; and she analyzes his method of scattering precious paradoxes on the smiling land below.

For the purpose of making the study of the essay form easier and more systematic, the author has divided the field into the aphoristic essay, the character essay, the classic essay, the letter essay, the short-story essay, the biographical and critical essay, the essay of the naturalist, and the familiar essay. It is pleasantly scientific to assemble these classes, but nowhere more than in the essay is it harder to make these nice distinctions. The aphoristic essay becomes familiar, the familiar essay becomes classic, the letter essay becomes critical—if we but turn the nib of our pen a point or two in the compass. But no one understands this difficulty to be infallible in classifying, better than Sister Eleanore—and no one can successfully cavil about her good success in arranging the groups. Even those casual readers—who care little or nothing for grouping, or scholarship, or close thinking in any activity of life—will be won by the easy literary style that abides so happily in the half a hundred essays that comprise the book. Those who have found works of literary criticism dull, will find no tedium here; for in the graceful talk of one who converses well, the author charms while she enlightens, and makes us a delighted party to her counsels. No reader will wonder that Sister Eleanore confesses a particular love for the familiar essay; and this is a weakness which all lovers of the intimate style will accept as evidence of the author's general intelligence. And general intelligence is rare in a topsy-turvy world.

Perhaps the dominant note in the whole volume is buoyancy. You feel that the author is doing the thing she can do, and desires to do. There is joy here, and glow—everywhere there is a touch of loveliness; and everywhere there is an eloquent pleading for the beauty of perfection—an urging, gentle and tender in its compulsion, but never drooping into a sentimentality weak and pale. One can imagine the learned lady in her professorial chair, calling forth the willing spirits of perhaps unwilling students to a feast of intellectual beauty —and one envies those feminine elect who are charmed away from the cloying allurements of mental-agility puzzles by the

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poetic fervor of Sister Eleanore's teaching. But we should be satisfied; for, in writing the volume, this monastic doctor of philosophy has amplified her voice to win still more numerous, if not more grateful, listeners.

The book is, indeed, a valuable work. It has the intellectual awareness of the critic, and the imaginative fancy of the poet; it has breadth of outlook; it has humor and vividness; and not least of all, it has democracy. But it has as well aristocracy—in the fine Attic sense of the word; for in many essential respects, this delightful book comes close to being quite the best work on the subject.

JOSEPH F. WICKHAM.

Luis de Leon, Study of the Spanish Renaissance, by Aubrey F. G. Bell. New York: Oxford University Press. $10.00.

WE have at last in English an admirably complete book on the Spanish master of Salamanca, Fray Luis de Leon —poet, and prose author of purest Castilian style, theologian among the first in a great period of theology, and biblical scholar of the highest attainments during an age when the questions concerning the edicts of the Council of Trent, on the authority of the Vulgate Bible in its relation to the Hebrew and Septuagint Greek texts, was a hard-fought and bitter question among the experts.

Today, it is true, the importance of Fray Luis de Leon is that of being one of the greatest devotional poets—not only in the history of Spanish literature, but in the whole world of modern religious inspiration. The older critics, like Ticknor, did not hesitate to place him on the very pinnacle of poetry, and the authority of Marcelino Melendez y Pelayo has strained its great capacities for a word of praise adequate to this transcendent merit. The poet of Noche Serena, the Ascension, the great ecclesiastical masterpieces in honor of the Blessed Virgin, should need no introduction to our readers. He was the soul of orthodoxy—a saintly being whose services to the truth and progress of his own age, and the authority of the Church in Spain, should not be minimized by any resurrection of the old quarrels in which he figured so manfully—suffered so cruelly—and triumphed with so much light, humility, and true philosophy.

The controversies that have raged in Spain during the last twenty years between the Augustinian champions, Padre Blanco and Padre Muinos, and the Dominican scholar, Padre Getino, came into the daily press of Madrid with almost the sensation of a scandal; this has been followed by more deliberate procedure in the reviews and publications of both factions, with the result that the soft poet of light and peace and retirement has been shown to be a man who knew little of the calmness to which he seems so ardently to aspire. He is the very personification of the university spirit of his age and, contrasted with the Dominican powers, which seemed intent on monopolizing the entire intellectual life of Spain, he makes a very fine point of study for such scholars in our own day as Fitzmaurice Kelly, the Abbé A. Lugan, and Mr. Aubrey F. G. Bell.

The brochure of Mr. Fitzmaurice Kelly was couched with the critical caution that characterizes all the Anglo-Irishman's work. He accepts the findings of Blanco and Getino, attempts to balance their contentions, and gives us a work which, while hardly more than a handbook, is highly creditable and authoritative.

The Abbé Lugan has issued through the press of the Instituto de las Españas a little book of exquisite appreciation of the poet, with very concise and illuminating details of the rather recondite beauties of his work.

In Aubrey F. G. Bell's new book, Fray Luis de Leon is approached in a complete manner, with a profundity of detail taken from the new Spanish historical writers, and giving a very graphic picture of the professor in his family, his monastery, and his classes at Salamanca. Mr. Bell is for the most part, highly satisfactory in his choice of authorities and discretion of his course in the controversial questions, and while he affects not to touch upon the religious problems in which Fray Luis was so important a factor, he usually adopts an attitude admirably fair. It might, however, be questioned as to whether in his attempt to glorify Spanish administration within the Church and to excuse or explain the proceedings of the Holy Office, he does not go too far in laying the burden for errors and misgovernment upon the court of Rome. He seems to forget that Fray Luis de Leon himself, at a dramatic moment in his career, complained bitterly that "in Spain it is impossible to put an edict of the Holy Father himself into effect." The rather evident desire to nationalize the early Spanish Church rather than to universalize it, will surely cause a gentle smile among orthodox Catholics.

It is with some comfort that one reads his charming exposition regarding the story of Fray Luis de Leon returning to his classes after some five years in the Secret Prisons of the Inquisition, and opening his lecture with the words—"Dicebamus hesterna die." He reasserts its entire plausibility in the face of the authorities, who desire to relegate this charming episode to the shelf of myths and unfounded legends. Mr. Bell, in this, deserves the thanks of all devotees of Fray Luis de Leon, and his admissions of the other contentions regarding the Hebrew descent of the poet and the rather querulous nature which seems to have been at the bottom of so many of his difficulties in life, ought to content the critics who have rather overspent themselves in their attacks upon his character.

The Fray Luis de Leon of Aubrey F. G. Bell is a valuable résumé of the general information regarding Spain in the latter renaissance, which has been a subject all too long overlooked by the historical student.

THOMAS WALSH.

Medieval Cities, by Henri Pirenne. Princeton: Princeton University Press. $2.50.

THE charming lectures delivered during the winter of 1922 at various American universities, by Henri Pirenne of the University of Ghent, have been admirably translated by Frank D. Halsey in a volume entitled Medieval Cities, Their Origin and the Revival of Trade.

In discussing the most ancient cities on the Mediterranean Sea, Professor Pirenne points out that the supposed dislike of the barbarians that swept down over the classical worlds has been proved to be a fable—that the Church, which had patterned its religious districts after the administrative provinces of the empire, regarded each diocese as the appurtenance of a civitas—and that as early as the sixth century, the word "civitas" took on the meaning of an episcopal centre and, as the head of the diocese, was contributory to safeguarding the integrity of the Roman cities in the ages of national destruction and decay.

Professor Pirenne continues with able discussions of the origins of the middle classes of municipal institutions prior to the renaissance, and of the preparation of the burgher mind, in spite of all its intense religious fervor, for the dangerous seed of the Reformation.

T. W.

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BRIEFER MENTION

The Adventures of a Spiritual Tramp, by Stanley B. James. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. $1.75.

THE highest praise that can be given this book, The Adventures of a Spiritual Tramp, is that it is worthy to stand side by side with A Spiritual Aeneid of Ronald A. Knox. It is entirely different in character yet supplements the latter volume in its final conclusion that "all roads lead to Rome." The Tramp had some rare and amusing adventures, for instance in the region of the Rocky Mountains where—"the absence of womenfolk did not tend to make the country more homelike. We fell into strange ways of housekeeping, washing up after meals was avoided at busy times by the device of turning the plates upside down and eating, at the next meal, from the other side. Butter was made by the simple method of putting the cream in an old coffee or cocoa tin, which was then tied on the horn of a saddle. In the course of the day's riding it would be jolted into quite passable butter." After the varied wanderings of his life, Mr. James finally declared his intention of entering the Catholic Church. "In Fleet Street an hour or so later, I met an old acquaintance who had once been a Congregational minister but was then on the staff of a daily newspaper. He had seen the announcement of my forthcoming reception and stopped to say, somewhat wistfully I thought, 'So you've got home?' 'Yes,' I replied, 'I've got home.' He looked me up and down for a few seconds to see what change it had made. Suddenly his eyes fell on my pipe. 'Oh, they allow you to smoke?' was his surprised comment. 'Yes,' I answered as I passed on, 'in this world.' "

The Last Letters of Sir Thomas More, edited by W. E. Campbell. St. Louis: B. Herder Book Company. $1.40.

THE last letters written by the great Chancellor of England, the admired of Erasmus, the leader of the humanist movement in England, "the model of pure and elegant style," as Dr. Johnson called him in his introduction to his dictionary, who gave his life in the vigor of his youth "to save religion itself," as Dr. Gairdner says "from insult, and public morals and social order from being subverted by the perversity of heretics,"—such letters must always be an important and precious possession of scholarship and the things of the soul. These letters edited by W. E. Campbell contain matters of the highest interest, in showing how More sought to turn aside the king's demand that he acknowledge him as head of the English church, his explanation of his dealings with the Nun of Kent and his accounts of the courtly bearing with which his case was in general conducted. The deliberate cruelty and purpose of his persecution and death look forth from these letters with the cold eyes of a Medusa.

The Irish Statesman of June 13, contains notes and comments in a finely practical vein, and there are special articles on A Free State Tariff Commission; A Scholar's Pastime, by Daniel Corkery; and Feasting the Prodigal Son, by John Brennan. Attractive features are also The Bad Penny, by V. D. Farrington; and the poem, Brightness of Brightness, from the Irish of Egan O'Rahilly, by Frank O'Connor.

THE QUIET CORNER

I counsel thee, shut not thy heart, nor thy library.—C. LAMB.

Primus Criticus threw down the publishers' catalogue he was reading, in annoyance.

"What is wrong?" asked Dr. Angelicus, who happened to be in a most benign frame of mind, smiling over the European travel circulars he was perusing, as he planned his vacation itinerary.

"It is futile to look for accuracy in the printed statement, any more," sighed Primus Criticus. "Even a publishers' circular is not untainted. Here," he continued, "I find The Anatomy of Melancholy attributed to *Sir Richard* Burton. Perhaps the next page will credit The Life of Christ to *John* Farrar."

"'What's in a name?'" sang Angelicus, blithely, as he checked with his pencil a particularly entrancing view of one of the Swedish Fjords. "I wouldn't mind," he went on, "if this circular called these magnificent Scandinavian water-ways the Swedish Fords. You can't change their beauty by misnaming them.

"Besides," he continued, "sometimes famous people have the same name, both fore, and aft. I see, for instance, that the New York Times of Sunday last, in an account of Robinson Crusoe's island, states that the real Crusoe—one Alexander Selkirk—who was voluntarily landed on the island of Juan Fernandez after a disagreement with the commander of the ship on which he was sailing-master, was at length rescued, after four years of solitude, by Will Rogers—commander of the Duke privateer. Of course, though that was in 1709—we have no proof that it isn't our own Will Rogers—though he scarcely looks such an age. However, life on the plains does much to keep one young, I am told—and he may have abandoned his privateer when his first grey hair appeared, and taken to the plains. If it was the same Will, what an entertaining journey home Robinson Crusoe must have had."

* * *

But Primus Criticus was not to be diverted from his grievance. "It is comforting to realize that these inaccuracies are not limited to America alone," he said. "I have here a clipping from a French newspaper. An item accounts the activities of a professor of English residing in Vienna, who gives his lessons each evening over the radio, talking to more than 200,000 pupils. 'Chaque soir,' the article says, 'le professeur Callum se place devant le microphone et commence—*God* evening, ladies and gentle*man*.' The item is headed—Un Ingenieux Professeur d'Anglais. Either the professor, or the newspaper, is ingenious—that much at least is accurate."

* * *

"Ah," said Dr. Angelicus, not to be outdone in quoting from the daily press, "I saw a newspaper item the other day

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that interested me. A certain man who died recently was reported as leaving a will which only permits his six children to come into their share of his estate when they have reached the age of fifty. I suppose he thought that only at that ripe age would they have sense enough to use money properly. Now to my mind, fifty is the dangerous age, and at that time of life I feel that people are less capable than at any other to manage money wisely."

"Would you suggest that all funds belonging to people over fifty should be curtailed and put under surveillance?" asked Primus Criticus.

"On second thought, no," declared Angelicus, who has just celebrated a birthday. "There are, of course, certain individuals who are at all times of life possessed of sagacity and wisdom."

* * *

"Not true of bachelors," broke in Miss Anonymoncule. "The older they grow, the foolisher. Everyone realizes this except themselves. I encountered a book the other day," she continued, "which I am sure could have been written by no one but an elderly bachelor. It was The Book of Politeness published by Fisher and Brother, sometime in the 1840's, and stated, regarding the art of dressing the coiffure—

" 'Curls seldom look well worn by ladies of tall stature, but they highly become a pert and saucy little miss, fairly bewitching all the young, and some of the old bachelors.'

"Now any author but an old bachelor, would have written —'fairly bewitching *all* the *old,* and *some* of the *young* bachelors.' "

* * *

"Masculine authors are not the only ones who commit absurdities," interrupted the Editor. "Here is an account of France's premier poetess, the beautiful Comtesse De Noailles, who wrote to the newspaper Comoedia recently—'I don't care what you say about my poetry, but I won't have you print ugly caricatures of me.' In the letter she enclosed a photograph of herself, which she declared to be exact, adding —'Your readers will see your caricatures have most wickedly distorted my features, representing me as a plain, unattractive creature, whereas—well, let them see for themselves.' "

"What did they see for themselves?" asked Miss Anonymoncule.

"The newspaper says—'a lovely face with the dreamy eyes of a picture-book princess,' replied the Editor. "I have a feeling that the next day the editor of the Comoedia called on the Comtesse in person to apologize."

—THE LIBRARIAN.

CONTRIBUTORS

L. J. S. WOOD is the Rome correspondent of The Tablet, and an authority on Italian politics.

THOMAS L. MASSON is associate editor of the Saturday Evening Post, and the author of Our American Humorists, and Tom Masson's Annual.

REV. THOMAS M. SCHWERTNER, O.P., editor of the Rosary Magazine, is the author of The Dominicans in History, and Dominican Devotion.

CONDÉ B. PALLEN, formerly managing editor of the Catholic Encyclopedia, is the author of numerous volumes of poetry and prose, among which are The Death of Sir Launcelot and Other Poems, and Education of Boys.

MARY BARBARA KOLARS is a contributor of essays and book reviews to current magazines.

JOSEPH F. WICKHAM, a member of the Department of English in the College of the City of New York, and professor of English at Manhattanville College, is the author of The English Essay.

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